



Northern Ireland  
Chamber of Commerce  
and Industry

LEARN  
GROW  
EXCEL

NI CHAMBER BUSINESS  
SUPPORT SERVICES



SME PARTNER



## ABOUT NI CHAMBER

Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NI Chamber) is an award winning, quality assured, customer focused membership organisation with over 230 years' commitment to the Northern Ireland economy. It is a well-known network for business with a membership of 1,200 businesses representing over 100,000 employees across Northern Ireland. It includes corporates, SMEs and micro businesses and represents a wide range of sectors including manufacturing, construction, professional and other services.

NI Chamber helps businesses grow locally and internationally through tailored programmes of support, networking and policy representation.

 Northern Ireland  
Chamber of Commerce  
and Industry

## WHAT IS LEARN GROW EXCEL?

Since 1783, NI Chamber has been at the forefront of private sector support for business, working alongside local Government to drive business performance in our members and the wider business community in Northern Ireland.

In recent years we have designed a range of support programmes to meet the needs of business. We address the key challenges and assist companies to network, seek out opportunities in new markets and grow their business - ultimately moving from good to great.

With new challenges ahead for 2017 and beyond, NI Chamber is taking its support for business to the next level and is inviting companies to Learn Grow Excel.

The Department for the Economy's Export Matters strategy has outlined targets to increase the value of export sales by 33% of the 2014 baseline and the number of companies with sales outside Northern Ireland by 19%, equating to 14,000 exporting businesses by 2020. Achievement of these targets is linked to the 'Escalator' model of support which maps interventions to the experience level of business.

In response to Export Matters, and to contribute to the achievement of the ambitious targets, NI Chamber supported by our SME Partner, Power NI, has developed Learn Grow Excel, a dynamic and powerful new suite of initiatives to support companies at every stage in the escalator continuum. We are doing this in partnership with select



NICK COBURN  
President



ANN MCGREGOR  
Chief Executive



organisations that share our ambition to support the development of the Northern Ireland economy.

The portfolio of services recognises the commitment from the private sector to assist local companies to scale-up and maximise business growth and export opportunities and we are thankful to our SME Partner Power NI and programme partners Bank of Ireland UK, Danske Bank, First Trust Bank, HSBC, Ulster Bank and Ulster Carpets.

The focus for Learn Grow Excel is to:

- **Inspire and Share Learning**
- **Build Capability and Networks**
- **Provide One to One Support**
- **Promote Development & Sales Opportunities**

Learn Grow Excel encapsulates uniquely the route which businesses will follow as they strive for success on the global export map. NI Chamber will be there with them every step of the way.

## LEARN GROW EXCEL SUPPORT OFFERING

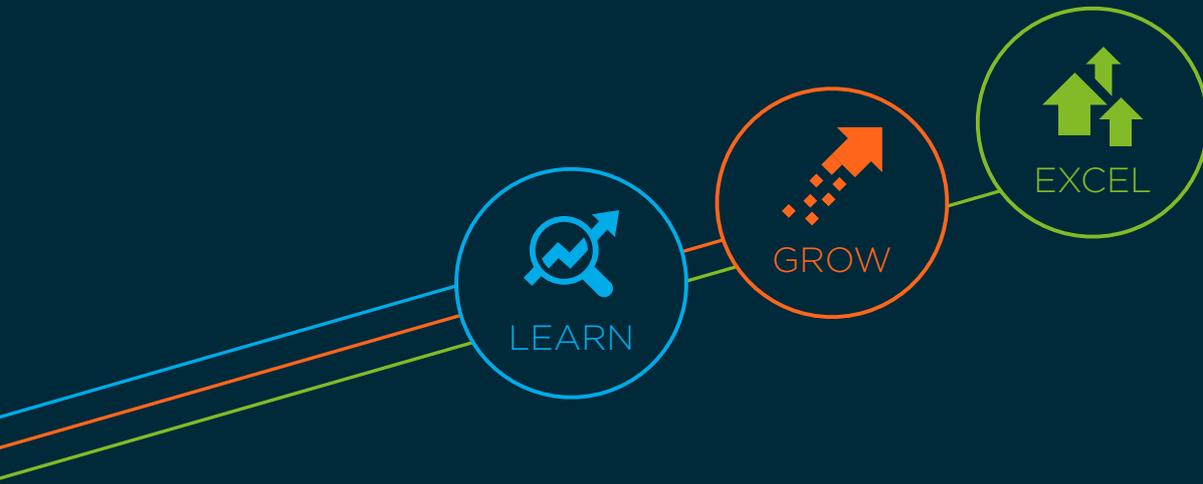
	<p><b>Connecting For Growth</b> Meet the Buyer Sales Opportunities</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>PAGE 07</b></p>
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SME PARTNER



**power ni**  
your kind of energy



## WHICH INITIATIVE IS RIGHT FOR ME?

The Learn Grow Excel initiative has been designed to support growing companies at every stage of development and encourage more export activity in Northern Ireland. Whether you are in the early stages of growth, starting out in new markets, or interested in scaling-up your business and expanding into additional export markets, the portfolio of programmes has something for every level of business. The only pre-requisites are the potential and commitment to grow your business for export and a determination to succeed.

## HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

Getting involved in Learn Grow Excel is easy. You can register your interest for any of the programmes by emailing: [learn-grow-excel@northernirelandchamber.com](mailto:learn-grow-excel@northernirelandchamber.com), indicating which initiative(s) you are interested in, and one of our team will be in touch to provide further details.

## MEET THE LEARN GROW EXCEL TEAM

The suite of programmes will be delivered by NI Chamber's experienced Learn Grow Excel Team.



**SANDRA SCANNELL**  
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**TBA**  
Head of SME Development



# SME PARTNER

With a history and heritage going back over 80 years Power NI has provided the energy behind many business export success stories from this part of the world. We are committed to helping the local SME sector prosper and are delighted to support the Learn Grow Excel initiative.

Power NI is Northern Ireland's leading energy company supplying over 500,000 homes, farms and businesses. After 15 years of competition, we remain the largest supplier to the business sector with over 30,000 SMEs on our books.

But being the largest supplier means nothing if it doesn't translate into great value for money and excellent customer service for our customers. We have a range of competitively priced, easy to understand tariffs, specially designed for small businesses. Our local business

support teams in Antrim and Omagh are on hand to provide specialist energy advice to help your business grow.

Power NI is also committed to the communities we serve and is actively involved in grassroots sponsorships and supporting the work of local Chambers of Commerce and business representative groups.

So with low prices, great discounts and outstanding customer service, it's no wonder more businesses here choose Power NI than any other supplier.



ALAN EGNER  
Commercial Sales  
& Marketing Manager





# CONNECTING FOR GROWTH



## CREATING CROSS BORDER BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH MEET THE BUYER EVENTS

The Republic of Ireland is our nearest export market and brings with it all the challenges of doing business internationally, from currency management to legal requirements. The Connecting for Growth programme is designed to facilitate increased business between companies from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, enabling access to larger firms with procurement needs at meet the buyer events and improving sales opportunities through networking and advice.

Consisting of two large scale meet the buyer style events and a cross border networking event, programme participation includes:

- One to one pre-arranged appointments, where companies are able to make a pitch to large buying companies across a range of sectors
- Advice from key experts on a range of business themes, delivered in bite size sessions
- Facilitated networking, increasing cross border business opportunities.

15/03

CROSS BORDER NETWORKING

LOCATION | BELFAST

24/05

MEET THE BUYER

LOCATION | NEWRY

08/11

MEET THE BUYER

LOCATION | BELFAST

Bank of Ireland  UK

### WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR

Bank of Ireland UK supports the Connecting for Growth programme because it is a great example of real tangible enablers that are making a difference. The Programme directly facilitates Northern Ireland businesses pitching and winning business with cross border customers. Now in its third year, the Connecting for Growth Programme has facilitated over 2,000 introductions between buyers and suppliers as well as providing direct access to financial services and business experts.



# DANSKE BANK EXPORT FIRST

## BE INSPIRED THROUGH THE SUCCESS STORIES OF EXPERIENCED EXPORTERS

In terms of global success, Northern Ireland companies have proven time and time again that they can punch well above their weight on the world stage through innovative thinking, quality products, effective strategies and sheer drive and determination. Danske Bank Export First seeks to encourage and grow export activity in Northern Ireland through the inspirational stories and shared learning of these successful exporters.

New, aspiring and growing exporters have the opportunity to access leading business people, listen to how they have grown their businesses in international markets, and obtain advice on all aspects of commercial development through export.

The initiative involves a series of private dinners with leading exporters and a range of company visits that include a factory tour of the host company.

<p><b>26/01</b>  <b>EXPORTER SHOWCASE</b></p>	<p><b>23/03</b>  <b>EXPORTER SHOWCASE</b></p>	<p><b>09/05</b>  <b>EXPORTER SHOWCASE</b></p>
<p><b>05/09</b>  <b>EXPORTER SHOWCASE</b></p>	<p><b>26/10</b>  <b>EXPORTER SHOWCASE</b></p>	



### WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR

The key to sustainable economic growth is export. At Danske Bank, we want to encourage businesses to think strategically about export as a growth strategy, and to help facilitate that. The Danske Bank Export First programme does this by helping aspiring exporters through knowledge sharing and networking with experienced and successful exporters who have 'been there, done that'.



# DEVELOPING YOUR GROWTH POTENTIAL

## ENHANCE SALES AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS WHILST BUILDING EFFECTIVE NETWORKS

Business growth starts with strong leadership, moves forward with effective sales strategies and is maintained by utilising the right networks. Developing Your Growth Potential seeks to assist SMEs to develop their sales and leadership capacity and to build vital networks to enable increased sales and development of partnerships. The initiative will feature 5 events per year, held across Northern Ireland, focusing on:

**LEADERSHIP** - Exceptional leadership can dramatically improve growth opportunities by boosting sales, profits and staff engagement. Understand the key elements and attributes of successful leaders and learn from the inspirational stories of top class entrepreneurs and those in top level leadership positions.

**SALES** - Business is all about winning sales. Utilising highly trained, engaging and energetic facilitators, Developing Your Growth Potential offers structured sales training tailored to develop the sales skills needed to enhance and grow your business.

**NETWORKING** - Networking is the single most powerful marketing tool you can use to accelerate and sustain success for your business.

**28/02**  
NETWORKING

**11/04**  
SALES  
TRAINING

**06/06**  
LEADERSHIP  
MASTERCLASS

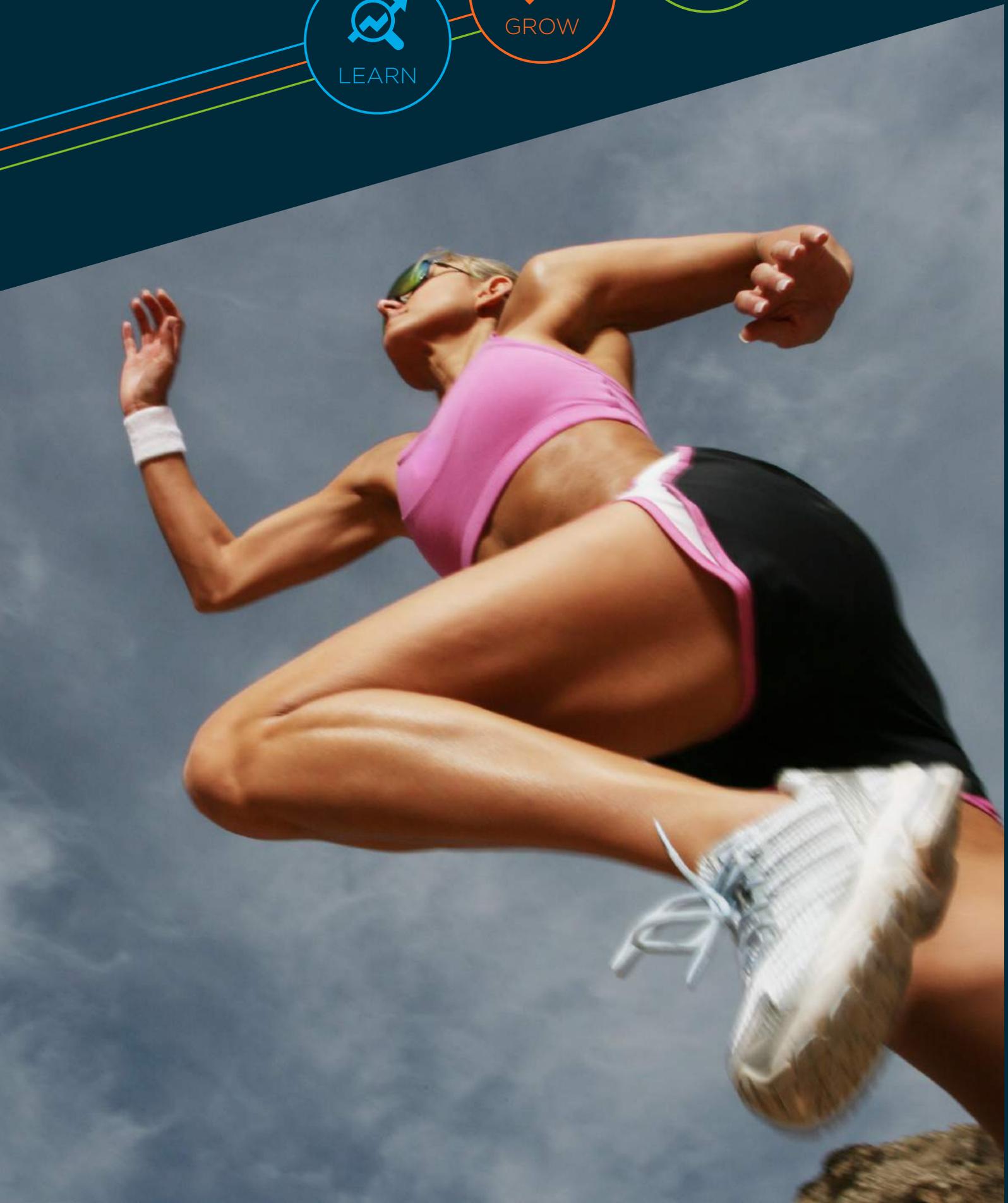
**23/08**  
SALES  
TRAINING

**03/10**  
LEADERSHIP  
MASTERCLASS



### WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR

First Trust Bank is committed to supporting the ambition of local businesses so we are delighted to sponsor the NI Chamber's 'Learn Grow Excel' Programme. By providing local entrepreneurs and businesses with practical advice, learning and networking opportunities, we can nurture and expand upon the talent embedded in our business community which is essential to growing our economy.



# INTERNATIONAL TRADE TRAINING

## TRAINING SUPPORT FOR LOGISTICS AND FINANCE TEAMS WITHIN EXPORTING COMPANIES

Securing the coveted export order is more than just sales; many factors need to be negotiated before the order is signed, sealed and can be dispatched to customers. Companies need to consider a range of factors – risk associated with payment, shipment responsibilities and who they lie with, and the required documentation which gets the goods through foreign ports.

NI Chamber has over 25 years' experience supporting manufacturing exporters with logistics and shipping requirements through its export document certification service. As an authorised issuing body and with an extensive international network, we have the knowledge and contacts to bring your team up to speed with the administrative requirements of shipping goods to foreign markets.

The International Trade Training series will focus on supporting the logistics of export. Rolling out in one-day workshops, the series will support more experienced manufacturing exporters to build capability in the areas of:

- Export Process and Documentation
- Letters of Credit and Overseas Payments
- Managing Risk of Trade Overseas

02/02

DOCUMENTARY  
LETTERS OF  
CREDIT FOR  
EXPORTS

04/05

NI CHAMBER  
EXPORT  
PROCESS &  
DOCUMENTATION  
TRAINING



### WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR

International trade continues to play a fundamental role in the development of Northern Ireland's economy and we're pleased to be supporting this series of seminars hosted by NI Chamber. There is so much to gain from exporting and trading overseas and now is the time for businesses here to take advantage of opportunities abroad. Our local team provides relationship management with a global reach. With our award-winning Trade Finance services, we are uniquely placed to support companies currently trading across borders as well as those aspiring to do so.

# 06/04

BELFAST

## LEARN GROW EXCEL CONFERENCE

A COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCE TO ENCOURAGE EXPORT GROWTH IN NORTHERN IRELAND

This conference is an unmissable event for businesses looking to trade internationally. The practical half-day of seminars and workshops will give tangible advice to exporters, as well as connect businesses with representatives from the worldwide Chambers of Commerce and Invest NI's international team.

Aimed at businesses of all sizes and sectors, with learning streams for both new and more established exporters, the day will have a strong practical focus. Delegates can look forward to a wide choice of informative workshops, lively panel discussions with businesses from both the goods and services sectors, and inspiring talks from pioneering exporters. There will also be plenty of time for networking with fellow exporters and international chambers of commerce representing a wide range of overseas markets.



### KEY ELEMENTS OF THE CONFERENCE INCLUDE:



LEARN

**LEARN** from inspirational exporting companies and experts in the many facets of exporting, including access to finance, e-commerce, logistics and international payments.



GROW

**GROW** your business through networking, discovering new export destinations, and by getting the practical advice that you need to succeed.



EXCEL

**EXCEL IN EXPORT** by meeting trusted Chamber representatives from across the globe, who will give frank advice and explain the opportunities in their markets, as well as Invest NI who can help you get there.



#### WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR

Ulster Carpets successfully export their products around the world, enabling the company to sustain growth over a number of years. Ulster Managing Director, Nick Coburn, hopes this conference gives other Northern Ireland businesses the confidence to expand and break into new markets.

# NEAR MARKET TRADE VISITS: LONDON & BIRMINGHAM

EXPLORE NEW MARKETS, BUILD NETWORKS  
AND CREATE NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

For many companies, Great Britain (GB) represents the first step to doing business outside Northern Ireland.

NI Chamber's near market trade visits aim to help local firms exploit the opportunities in larger GB cities such as London and Birmingham via a series of near market visits throughout 2017.

With the uncertainty following the EU Referendum, GB represents a safe and easy alternative for the first steps to export and is a market where NI Chamber has an extensive and established network via the British Chambers of Commerce and member companies who have a presence in GB.



## 23-24/02

### LONDON

As one of the world's most competitive cities, London offers expanding international companies leading talent and transport links, light-touch business regulation and huge opportunities for growth. Among more than 4m workers, you'll find 230 languages, tech specialists, 400,000 creatives and some of the world's best professional services partners.

A London base gives you access to more than 8m Londoners and 50m people in Europe, the world's biggest single market. London is Europe's most accessible city with excellent air and rail links.

\*Pre-mission briefing on 20/02



## 14-15/09

### BIRMINGHAM

Home to world-class companies, major R&D facilities, innovative entrepreneurs, renowned universities and one of the youngest populations in Europe, Birmingham is a dynamic, thriving and business-focused region.

The region is well connected, and centrally located in the UK, and is home to 70,500 companies including over 1,500 international firms. Major global players across various sectors are based here - including Jaguar Land Rover, JCB, Kraft, Amey, Deloitte and Cadbury.

\*Pre-mission briefing on 08/09



#### WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR

As part of a large UK wide Banking Group with an expansive infrastructure and highly professional business offering across GB, Ulster Bank's dedicated team is delighted to support this exciting new initiative which equips our local firms with the knowledge, networks and confidence to enter or expand in markets that are on our doorstep and uphold fantastic potential for expansion and continued success.

# NI CHAMBER CONNECTIONS

## UTILISING NI CHAMBER'S NETWORK OF BUSINESS PEOPLE AND INTERNATIONAL CHAMBERS TO ACHIEVE BUSINESS GROWTH

Networks mean business, and having the right well developed network to tap into is invaluable to growing companies. No matter what business conundrum you are facing, someone has faced it before you. No matter which market you are trying to do business in, there are many forms of support which will make your journey easier. NI Chamber has a well-established network which local businesses can utilise. With over 1,200 member companies locally, led by some of Northern Ireland's top business people and access to a wide-spread global network of Chambers, including the British Chambers of Commerce, Chambers Ireland, International Chambers and the World Chambers network in every corner of the globe, NI Chamber has the Connections to help you take your business to the next level.

### **Business Professional Links**

Led by NI Chamber Past President and Power NI Managing Director, Stephen McCully, NI Chamber has access to a pool of experienced business professionals who can offer advice, guidance and support across a range of business topics. By utilising their own experiences our pool of professionals support local companies through highly beneficial peer to peer learning. Under the programme, NI Chamber facilitate matching based on individual business need.

### **International Introductions**

If you are seeking advice on exploring a new market for the first time, are following up on a recent trade mission, or want to add scale to activity in current markets, NI Chamber's international links can provide the on-the-ground knowledge to support you. NI Chamber will provide introductions to like-minded counterparts in Chambers across the world. Whatever the market, our network can answer your query and support market development.



# SCALING-UP

## IMPROVE SCALE AND DRIVE EXCELLENCE FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

The responsibility to become 'a scale-up nation', and create a business environment where a greater number of companies achieve global potential, rests with all who have an interest in supporting economic growth and those with the determination, capability and ambition to grow their business, locally and internationally.

Growing companies have specific requirements for capital, management, skills, leadership and organisational processes, and most undertaking scale-up activities face similar issues.

The Scaling-Up initiative will offer local companies the opportunity to tap into one to one support from NI Chamber's new Head of SME Development, as well as become part of a group of like-minded business people, who can interact to support each other to add scale to their business.

The initiative will involve:

- Business Assessment
- One to One Coaching & Development
- Allocation of business professionals to companies
- Group workshops covering key scale-up challenges
- Peer to peer knowledge sharing and learning

\* Participation on Scaling-Up is through application process only.

27/04

SCALING-UP  
WORKSHOP

12/10

SCALING-UP  
WORKSHOP

Bank of Ireland  UK

### WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR

Bank of Ireland UK is passionate about its role in helping businesses in Northern Ireland grow. This means encouraging business leaders to invest in innovative new products and services, markets, ways of doing business and of course in their people. We believe working with NI Chamber on the new Scaling-Up Programme will be of further value in developing confidence within the business community to seize the opportunities for growth.

## BANK OF IRELAND UK



At Bank of Ireland UK we are committed to being more than a provider of financial services. We are a true partner in business.

With a presence in Northern Ireland for almost 200 years, we have supported businesses of all sizes from start-ups and small businesses, through to SMEs and Corporate businesses. We work with a number of industry partners to develop programmes which support business start-ups, networking and growth.

Bank of Ireland (UK) plc is a separately incorporated subsidiary of Bank of Ireland Group, which has been a leading retail bank in Ireland since it was established in 1783. Bank of Ireland UK is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority, and employs c. 2,200 staff.

For more information please visit <http://boini.bankofireland.com/business/> or contact **Gavin Kennedy**, Director Business Banking via email: [gavin.kennedy@boi.com](mailto:gavin.kennedy@boi.com)

## DANKSE BANK



Danske Bank is part of the Danske Bank Group and one of the leading retail banks in Northern Ireland.

Customers benefit from the convenience of modern technology combined with the expertise of experienced relationship managers, business support teams and specialists in key areas such as Asset Finance, Invoice Finance, Merchant Acquiring, Markets, Trade Finance and Cash Management.

Danske plays an integral role in the overseas expansion of some of Northern Ireland's leading

exporters, and in maximising the export potential of innovative local companies for whom overseas markets may be the next step.

Part of this support includes a successful partnership with NI Chamber, Danske Bank Export First, bringing together new and aspiring exporters and offering them access to local businesses who are experienced exporters.

For more information on how Danske Bank can help your business visit [www.danskebank.co.uk/business](http://www.danskebank.co.uk/business) or contact **Shaun McAnee**, Managing Director of Corporate Banking by emailing [shmca@danskebank.co.uk](mailto:shmca@danskebank.co.uk)

## FIRST TRUST



Every day, First Trust Bank supports local businesses of all sizes across a broad range of industries. The diversity of firms they work with and the flexible and innovative approach they see businesses adopt, is reflected in the range of products and services offered to customers.

With specialised sectoral advisors, a dedicated corporate and business team and experienced staff across its branch network, First Trust Bank is committed to understanding the unique needs of clients and the industries in which they operate.

A champion of business and enterprise and ultimately growing Northern Ireland's economy,

First Trust Bank takes a proactive role in helping local companies reach their full potential. As well as partnering this new Programme, the Bank sponsors business and community events across NI, recognises and celebrates success through awards such as the First Trust Bank Business Eye Small Business Awards, the IoD Director of the Year Awards, and nurtures talent with bespoke programmes such as the AIB Start-up Academy.

To find out how First Trust Bank can support your business visit [www.firsttrustbank.co.uk/business](http://www.firsttrustbank.co.uk/business) or contact **Brian Gillan**, Head of Business and Corporate Banking at First Trust Bank on [Brian.M.Gillan@aib.ie](mailto:Brian.M.Gillan@aib.ie)

## HSBC BANK



For 150 years we have been where the growth is, connecting customers to opportunities. Today, HSBC Commercial Banking serves businesses ranging from small enterprises focused primarily on their domestic markets through to corporates operating globally. Whether it is working capital, term loans, trade finance or payments and cash management solutions, we provide the tools and expertise that businesses need to thrive. At HSBC Commercial Banking we give businesses access to a geographic network covering more than 90% of global trade and capital flows.

In Northern Ireland, our relationship team are the first, and main, touchpoint to an international capability - having a local bank like HSBC in Northern Ireland gives business of all sizes a global banking proposition. We offer business the unique model of local management across a Global Business Network spanning 66 territories and all our local banks have a trade finance offering.

For more information please visit [www.hsbc.co.uk](http://www.hsbc.co.uk) or contact **Nial Douglas**, Area Director Northern Ireland - Corporate & Business Banking via email [nial.douglas@hsbc.com](mailto:nial.douglas@hsbc.com)

## ULSTER BANK



For 180 years Ulster Bank has been serving customers in Northern Ireland, tending to their everyday banking needs. As part of The Royal Bank of Scotland group, we're a full service retail and commercial bank offering a range of banking products and services including current accounts, mortgages, corporate and personal banking through traditional and cutting edge digital channels. With the largest branch network of any bank in Northern Ireland, Ulster Bank comprises three units - Branch and

Personal Banking, Business Banking, Corporate and Commercial Banking. Firmly embedded in the communities we serve, Ulster Bank is the principal sponsor of the Balmoral Show, the Belfast Homecoming, the MAC International Ulster Bank Prize and the Entrepreneurial Spark hatchery for early stage businesses.

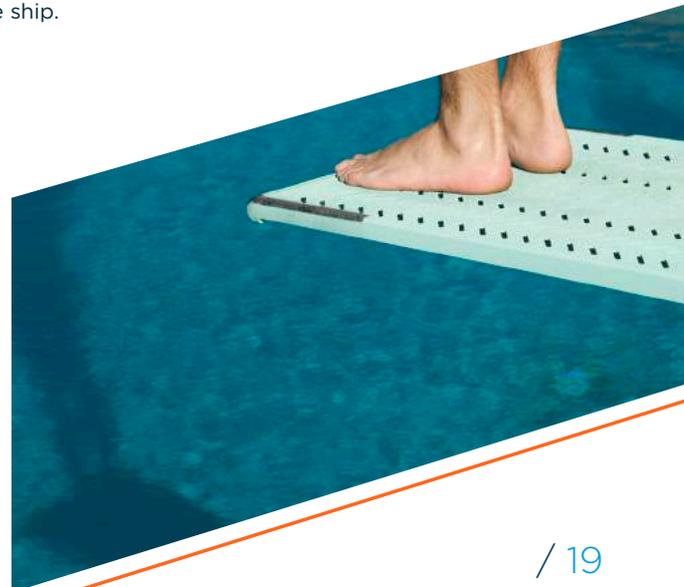
For more information please visit <http://digital.ulsterbank.co.uk/business.html> or contact **Nigel Walsh**, Director of Commercial Banking, South, Ulster Bank Corporate & Commercial NI, [nigel.walsh@ulsterbank.com](mailto:nigel.walsh@ulsterbank.com)

## ULSTER CARPETS



Ulster Carpets have been weaving the finest quality axminster and wilton carpets at their Northern Ireland headquarters for over 75 years. The family owned company's focus on quality and innovation in weaving technology has secured their position as a market leader.

Ulster now export over 70% of their products outside of the UK and Ireland to every corner of the globe. You will find their bespoke woven axminster in the world's finest hotels, casinos and cruise ships including; The Burj Al Arab Dubai, The Savoy London and the recently re-mastered Queen Mary II cruise ship.





Northern Ireland  
Chamber of Commerce  
and Industry



## GET IN TOUCH

For further information please  
contact a member of our team.

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